

**This book contains the account
of Zechariah foretelling about
God restoring the Israeli people
and establishing his eternal rule.
We call this book
Zechariah**

Yahweh summons his people to return to him

¹ *I am Zechariah, a prophet, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Iddo. When Darius had been the emperor of Persia for almost two years, during November of that year, Yahweh gave me this message:*

² *“I was very angry with your ancestors. ³ So tell this to the people: I, the Commander of the armies of angels, say, ‘Return to me, and if you do that, I will help you again. ⁴ Do not be like your ancestors. Other prophets, who have now died, continually proclaimed to your ancestors that they should stop doing the evil things that they were continually doing. But they refused to pay attention to what I said. ⁵ Your ancestors have died and are now in their graves [RHQ]. And the prophets did not [RHQ] live forever, either. ⁶ But I punished [IDM] the people for disobeying the commands and the decrees which I commanded my servants the prophets to tell to the people.*

Then they ◀repented/turned away from their evil behavior▶ and said, ‘The Commander of the armies of angels has done to us what we

deserved for our evil behavior, just like he said that he would do.’ ”

The vision of the horses

⁷ *Three months later*, on February 15, Yahweh gave *another* message to me.

⁸ During the night *I had a vision*. *In the vision* I saw an *angel* who was on a red horse. He was in a narrow valley among some myrtle trees. Behind him were *angels on red, brown, and white horses*.

⁹ I asked the angel who had been talking to me, “Sir, who are those *angels on the horses*?”

He replied, “I will show you who they are.”

¹⁰ Then the *angel* who had been under the myrtle trees explained. *He said*, “They are the *angels* whom Yahweh sent to ◀patrol/see what is happening in▶ the *entire* world.”

¹¹ Then those angels reported to the angel who was *there* among the myrtle trees, “We have traveled throughout the world, and we have found out that *the army of the emperor of Persia has conquered nations* throughout the world, *and that* those nations are now ◀helpless/unable to resist his army▶.”

¹² Then the angel asked, “Commander of the armies of angels, how long will you continue to not be merciful to Jerusalem and the *other* towns in Judah? You have been angry with them for 70 years!” ¹³ So Yahweh spoke kindly to the angel who had talked to me, saying things that comforted/encouraged him.

¹⁴ Then the angel who had been talking with me said to me, “Proclaim this *to the people of Jerusalem*: The Commander of the armies of angels says that he is very concerned about *the people who live on Zion Hill and in the other parts of Jerusalem*. ¹⁵ But he is very angry with the nations that are *proud and feel safe*. He was only a little bit angry *with the people of Judah*, but *he is very angry with the surrounding nations because they caused the people of Judah to experience complete disaster*.

¹⁶ Therefore, this is what he says: ‘I will again be merciful to *the people of Jerusalem*, and they will rebuild my temple. Men will measure *all the land in the city before they start rebuilding the houses*.’

¹⁷ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* said this: “Tell the people that *the people in my towns in Judah* will soon be very prosperous again, and I will encourage *the people of Jerusalem*, and their city will again be my chosen city.’”

The vision of the four horns

¹⁸ Then I looked up, and I saw in front of me four *animal horns*. ¹⁹ I asked the angel who had been speaking to me, “What are those *horns*?”

He replied, “Those horns *represent the armies that forced the people of Jerusalem and other places in Judah and Israel to go to other countries*.”

²⁰ Then Yahweh showed me four ◀craftsmen/
men who make things from metal▶. ²¹ I asked,
“What are those men coming to do?”

He replied, “*The armies represented by those horns caused the people of Judah to be scattered, with the result that they suffered greatly. But the craftsmen have come to cause those who attacked [IDM] Judah to be terrified and crushed.*”

2

The man with a measuring line

¹ Then I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line/tape. ² I asked him, “Where are you going?”

He replied, “*I am going to measure Jerusalem, to determine how wide it is and how long it is.*”

³ Then the angel who had been talking to me started to leave, and another angel walked toward him. ⁴ That other angel said to him, “Run and tell that young man that *some day* there will be very many people and livestock in Jerusalem, with the result that there will be too many to live inside the city walls; many will *live outside* the walls. ⁵ And Yahweh says that he *himself* will be *like* [MET] a wall of fire around *the city*, and he will be there with his glory.”

⁶ Yahweh declares *to the people who were exiled to Babylonia*, “Run! Flee from Babylonia [MTY], the country east of *Israel*, and flee in all directions from the places where I caused you to be scattered!

⁷ You people *who previously lived in Jerusalem* and who *now* live in Babylon, flee from there!

⁸ The *armies of the* nations that *attacked you* and took away your valuable possessions have attacked those who are very precious to the Commander of the armies of angels [IDM]. So he says this about me: ‘After I have honored him and sent him to *rebuke* the nations, ⁹ *it is as though* I will strike them with my fist, with the result that those who were their slaves will *now* take back their possessions from those who caused them to become slaves.’ And when that happens, you will know that the Commander of the armies of angels is the one who sent me.”

¹⁰ Yahweh says, “*You people of* Jerusalem [APO], shout and be happy, *because* I will be coming to you and I will live among you!”

¹¹ At that time, *people of* many nations will be united to Yahweh and will become his people. He will live among *all of* you; and you will know that the Commander of the armies of angels is *the one who* sent me to you. ¹² *The people of* Judah will be a very special part of his sacred country, and Jerusalem will again be the city that he has chosen. ¹³ Everyone, *everywhere*, should be silent in the presence of Yahweh, because he *again* will come *down* from the sacred place where he lives in heaven *to do great things for us*.

3

The vision of the Supreme Priest

¹ Then *Yahweh* showed me Joshua, the Supreme Priest, *who was* standing in front of the angel that Yahweh had sent. And Satan

was standing at Joshua's right side, *ready* to accuse him. ² But Yahweh said to Satan, "Satan, I am rebuking you! *I am the one* who has chosen Jerusalem *to be my special city, and I* am rebuking you! This *man, Joshua, has been brought back from Babylonia*; he is surely like [MET, RHQ] a burning stick that has been snatched from a fire."

³ Joshua was wearing filthy clothes while he was standing in front of the angel. ⁴ The angel said to those *other angels* who were standing in front of him, "Take off his filthy clothes!"

After they did that, the angel said to Joshua, "Look! I have taken away *the guilt of your sins*, and I will put beautiful clothes on you."

⁵ Then I said to them, "Put a clean turban on his head!" So they put a clean turban on his head and put *new* clothes on him, while the angel sent by Yahweh was standing there.

⁶ Then the angel said *this* to Joshua: ⁷ "The Commander of the armies of angels says that if you do what I want you to do [IDM], and obey my instructions, you will ◀be in charge of/have authority over▶ *what is done in* my temple and its courtyard. And I will allow you to speak at any time to the angels who are standing near to me.

⁸ Joshua, *you are* the Supreme Priest, and your ◀associates/fellow priests▶ are sitting in front of you. They symbolize/represent things that will happen in the future. *Some day* I am going to bring someone who will work for me, someone who will be called the Branch. ⁹ Look at the

stone that I have put in front of Joshua. There are seven sides on the stone. I will engrave a message on that stone, and in one day I will remove the guilt of *all the people of* this country.

¹⁰ At that time, each of you will invite his friends *to come and sit* under his grapevine and under his fig tree. *That is what* the Commander of the armies of angels declares.”

4

The vision of the lampstand

¹ Then the angel who had been talking with me returned, and he called to me as though I had been asleep. ² He asked me, “What do you see?”

I replied, “I see a lampstand *made* completely of gold. There is a small bowl *for olive oil* at the top, and there are seven *small* lamps around the bowl, and a place for a wick on each lamp.

³ Furthermore, I see two olive trees, one at the right side of the lampstand and one at the left side.”

⁴ I asked the angel who was talking with me, “Sir, what are these?”

⁵ He replied, “Surely you know [RHQ] what they are?”

I replied, “No, I do not know.”

⁶ Then he said to me, “This is the message that Yahweh *says that you should give* to Zerubbabel *the governor of Judah: ‘You will do what I want you to do, but it will not be by your own strength or power. It will be done by the power of my*

Spirit, says the Commander of the armies of angels.

⁷ Zerubbabel, you have many difficult matters to handle. They are like high mountains [MET]. But they will become easy to handle, as though they will become flat land. And you will bring to the temple the final stone to complete the rebuilding of the temple. When you do that, all the people will shout repeatedly, "It is beautiful! May God bless it!" ' ' "

⁸ Then Yahweh gave me another message. ⁹ He said to me, "Zerubbabel [SYN] laid the first stone in the foundation of the temple, and he will put the last stone in its place. When that happens, the people will know that it is I, the Commander of the armies of angels, who have sent you to them." And he said, "The seven bowls represent the eyes of Yahweh, who looks back and forth at everything that happens on the earth."

¹⁰ No one [RHQ] should think that little things that are done at the beginning of a big project are unimportant. When the temple is almost finished being rebuilt, Zerubbabel will use a ◀plumb line/string with a stone fastened to it▶ to see if the walls they are building are straight; so when the people see that, they will rejoice."

¹¹ Then I asked the angel, "What is the meaning of the two olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand? ¹² And what is the meaning of the two olive branches, one alongside each of the gold pipes from which olive oil flows to the lamps?"

¹³ He replied, "Surely [RHQ] you know what they are?"

I replied, “No, sir, *I do not know.*”

¹⁴ So he said, “They represent the two *men who have been appointed* [MTY] to serve the Lord who *rules the entire earth.*”

5

The vision of the flying scroll

¹ I looked up again, and I saw a scroll that was flying *through the air.*

² The angel asked me, “What do you see?”

I replied, “I see a flying scroll that is *huge*, ◀10 yards/9 meters▶ long and ◀5 yards/4.5 meters▶ wide.”

³ Then he said to me, “On this scroll is written the *words that Yahweh is speaking* to curse the entire country. On *one side of* the scroll it is written that every thief will be banished. On *the other side* it is written that everyone who tells a lie when he is solemnly promising to tell the truth will also be banished from the country.

⁴ The Commander of the armies of angels says, ‘I will send *copies of* this scroll to the places where thieves live and to the houses of those who use my name when they solemnly promise to tell the truth. *The copies of* this scroll will stay in their houses, until those houses and all their wood and stones are destroyed.’ ”

The vision of the woman in a basket

⁵ Then the angel who had been talking to me came closer to me and said, “Look up and see what is appearing!”

⁶ I asked him, “What is it?”

He replied, “It is a big basket *for measuring grain*. But it represents the sins that everyone in this nation has committed.”

⁷ Then *the angel* lifted the basket’s cover, *which was made* of lead. There was a woman sitting inside the basket! ⁸ The angel said, “She represents the wicked things *that people do*.” Then the angel pushed her back into the basket and closed the very heavy lid *again*.

⁹ Then I looked up and saw two women in front of me. They *were flying toward us*, with their wings spread out in the wind. Their wings were *large*, like [SIM] storks’ wings. They lifted the big basket up into the sky.

¹⁰ I asked the angel who had been talking to me, “Where are they taking that basket?”

¹¹ He replied, “*They are taking it* to Babylonia to build a temple for it. When the temple is finished, they will set the basket there on a pedestal *for people to worship it*.”

6

The vision of four chariots

¹ I looked up again, and *in the vision* I saw four chariots coming toward me. *They were coming* between two mountains *that were made* of bronze. ² The first chariot *was pulled by* red horses, the second chariot *was pulled by* black horses, ³ the third chariot *was pulled by* white horses, and the fourth chariot *was pulled by* spotted gray horses. They were all very strong horses. ⁴ I asked the angel who had been

speaking to me, “Sir, what do those chariots mean?”

⁵ The angel replied, “They have come from standing in the presence of the Lord who controls/rules the entire earth. They will go across the sky in four directions. ⁶ The chariot *pulled by* black horses will go north, the *one pulled by* white horses will go west, the *one pulled by* spotted gray horses will go south.”

⁷ When those powerful horses left, their *chariot-drivers* were eager to go throughout the world. *As they were leaving*, the angel said to them, “Go throughout the world *and see what is happening!*” So that is what they did.

⁸ Then the angel called to me *and said*, “Look/Listen, the *drivers of the* chariots that have gone north will do what the Spirit of *Yahweh wants them to do* there.”

A crown was given to Joshua

⁹ Then Yahweh gave me *another* message. ¹⁰ He said, “Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah will be bringing some silver and gold from the people who were ◀exiled in/forced to go to▶ Babylon. As soon as they arrive, go to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. ¹¹ Take *some of that* silver and gold from them and make a crown. Then put it on the head of Jehozadak’s son Joshua, the Supreme Priest. ¹² Tell him that *I*, the Commander of the armies of angels, say that the man who is called the Branch will come. He will leave the place where he is now, and he will *supervise those who* build my temple.

¹³ He is the one who *will tell those who will build my temple what to do*. He will wear royal clothing and he will sit on his throne and rule. There will also be a priest *sitting* next to his throne, and the two of them will work together harmoniously. ¹⁴ The crown must be *kept* in my temple to remind people of what Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah *did for them*. ¹⁵ People who are *living* far away will come and *help to build* my temple. When that happens, the people will know that *I*, the Commander of the armies of angels, have sent you to them. *That will happen* if they faithfully obey me, Yahweh, your/their God.”

7

The people must act justly and mercifully, not only habitually abstain from eating food

¹ When Darius had been the emperor for almost four years, on December 7, Yahweh gave me *another* message. ² The people of Bethel city sent two men, Sharezer and Regem-Melech, along with some other men, *to the temple of Yahweh, the Commander of the armies of angels*, to request that Yahweh bless them. ³ They also asked the priests at Yahweh’s temple and the prophets *this question*: “For many years, during the fifth month *and during the seventh month of each year*, we have mourned and ◀fasted/abstained from eating food▶. Should we *continue to do that*?”

⁴ Then the Commander of the armies of angels gave me a message. ⁵ *He said*, “Tell [RHQ] the

priests and all the *other* people of Judah that during the past 70 years, when they mourned and fasted during the fifth and seventh months *of each year*, it was not really [RHQ] me, *Yahweh*, whom they were *honoring*.⁶ And when they ate and drank, it was really [RHQ] to *benefit* themselves.⁷ That is certainly [RHQ] what I continually told the former prophets to proclaim *to the people*, when Jerusalem and the nearby towns were prosperous and filled with people, and people *also* lived in the desert area to the south and in the foothills *to the west*.”

⁸ *Yahweh* gave another message to me, saying
⁹ “*Tell the people that this is what the Commander of the armies of angels says: ‘Do what is just/right, and act kindly and mercifully toward each other. ¹⁰ Do not ◀oppress/treat cruelly▶ widows or orphans or foreigners or poor people. Do not even think about doing evil to anyone else.’*”

¹¹ But the people refused to pay attention *to what Yahweh said*. They turned their backs *to him*, and put their hands over their ears in order to not hear *what he said*.¹² They were very stubborn [IDM], and they would not listen to the laws *that God gave to Moses* or the messages that the Commander of the armies of angels told his Spirit to give to the prophets who were now dead. So the Commander of the armies of angels was very angry.

¹³ The Commander of the armies of angels says, “When I called/spoke *to the people*, they would not listen. So when they called/prayed *to me*, I did not listen.¹⁴ And I caused them to be

scattered among many nations, where they were strangers. *It was as though* [MET] a whirlwind *picked them up and carried them away from their country.* The country/land that they *were forced to leave* was ruined, with the result that no one could *live there or even* travel through it. *It was previously* a delightful land, but they caused it to become ◀desolate/like a desert▶.”

8

Yahweh promised to bless Jerusalem

¹ Yahweh gave me *another* message. He said,
² “This is what *I*, the Commander of the armies of angels, say: ‘I love *the people of* Jerusalem; I love them very much, and I am very angry with their enemies.’

³ So this is what I say: ‘*Some day* I will return to *Zion Hill* and I will live there. *At that time*, Jerusalem will be called the city *where people* ◀are faithful to/faithfully obey▶ me, and *people will say that Zion Hill is holy* because it is where the Commander of the armies of angels dwells.’ ”

⁴ The Commander of the armies of angels also says this: “*Some day* old men and old women will again sit along the streets of Jerusalem, each of them holding a cane because of their being very old. ⁵ And the city streets will be full of boys and girls playing.”

⁶ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “*When those things happen*, it will seem marvelous to the people who are still alive, but it certainly will not [RHQ] seem marvelous to me!”

⁷ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “I will rescue my people from countries to the northeast and to the southwest *to which they were forced to go*. ⁸ I will bring them back *to Judah*, and they will *again* live in Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will be faithful *to them* and act righteously *toward them*.”

⁹ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “When the foundation for my temple was laid, there were prophets there who proclaimed messages *from me*. Some of you heard what those prophets said. So be brave/courageous [MTY] *while you are building* the temple, in order that you may *finish* building it. ¹⁰ Before you started *to rebuild the temple*, no one could hire men or animals *to work for them*, because there was no money to pay for them. And people were afraid to go anywhere because I had caused people to oppose each other, and *they thought that* there were enemies *everywhere*.

¹¹ But now I will act differently toward you people who are still alive, *differently* than I did previously. *That is what I*, the Commander of the armies of angels, say.

¹² *From now on*, it will be peaceful when you plant *your seeds*, and your grapevines will produce grapes, and good crops will grow in your fields. There will be rain. I will give all those things to you people who are still alive.

¹³ You *people of Judah and Israel*, *the people of other* nations have cursed you. But I will rescue you, and you will be a blessing *to the people of*

many nations. So do not be afraid; work hard [MTY] to finish building the temple.”

¹⁴ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “When your ancestors caused me to become very angry, I decided to punish them. And I did not change my mind. ¹⁵ But now *I will do something different*. I am planning to do good things to *the people of Jerusalem and other towns in Judah*. So do not be afraid. ¹⁶ These are the things that you should do: *You should always tell the truth to each other. In the courts, your judges must make decisions according to what is correct and fair.* ¹⁷ Do not plan to do evil things to others, and do not falsely promise *to do things that you know that you will not do*. I hate all those things.”

¹⁸ The Commander of the armies of angels spoke to me *again*. ¹⁹ This is what he said: “The times when you people of Judah ◀fast/abstain from food▶ during the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months *of each year* will become good and very happy/joyful [DOU] festivals. But you must want *to speak truthfully and be peaceful.*”

²⁰ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “*Some day* people from many *people-groups and foreign cities* will come *here to Jerusalem*. ²¹ People from one city will go to *the people in another city* and say, ‘Let’s *go together to Jerusalem* to worship Yahweh and ask him to bless us; we *ourselves* are going.’ ²² And *people from many people-groups and from powerful nations* will come to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh and ask him to bless them.”

²³ The Commander of the armies of angels *also* says this: “At that time, *this is what will happen everywhere*: A group of people from one nation or a group of people who speak another language will grab the fringe/edge of the robe of a Jew and say *to him*, ‘We have heard *people say* that God is with you. So allow us to go with you *to Jerusalem to worship him.*’ ”

9

Israel's enemies will be punished

¹ *This is another message that I received from Yahweh.*

Yahweh said, “I watch [MTY] everyone, especially the tribes of Israel; so I will punish the people in the Hadrach region and in Damascus city because of what they did to the people of Israel.

² *I will also punish the people in nearby Hamath city.*

I will also punish the people in Tyre and Sidon cities, even though they are considered to be [IRO] very wise.

³ *The people in Tyre built a high wall around their city.*

They piled up huge amounts of silver and gold as though they were piles of dirt in the streets.

⁴ *But I, Yahweh, will cause their precious possessions to be taken away*

and all their ships to be destroyed,
and their city will be destroyed by a fire.

⁵ *The people in Ashkelon city* will see that *happen*,
and they will become very afraid.

The people in Gaza city will shake because of
being terrified,
and *the people in Ekron city* will shake too,
because they will no longer expect to *pros-*
per.

The king of *the city of Gaza* will be killed,
and *the city of Ashkelon* will be deserted.

⁶ Foreigners will occupy Ashdod city.

I will cause the *people in all those cities of*
Philistia to no longer be proud.

⁷ I will no longer allow them to eat [MTY] meat
that still has blood in it,
and I will forbid them to eat [MTY] food
that I [MTY] have not allowed them to eat
because it was offered to idols.

At that time, the *people in Philistia* who survive
will worship me,
and they will become *my people*, like the
people of Judah are.

The Philistine people of Ekron will also become
my people
like [SIM] the people of Jebus did *when they*
were conquered.

⁸ I will protect my temple,
and I will not allow any *enemy soldiers* to
enter it.

No *enemies* will harm my people again,
because I will be watching over *my people*
carefully.

The coming King

⁹ Rejoice very much, *you people of Jerusalem*
[APO, DOU]
and shout joyfully,
because your king will be coming to you.

He is righteous and victorious;
but he will be gentle,
and *he will be riding on a donkey,*
on a young female donkey.

¹⁰ I will get rid of the chariots in the Ephraim
region that are used in battles
and *all the war horses in Jerusalem.*

All the bows used in wars will be broken.
Your king will proclaim that he will cause
things to go well and peacefully in the
nations.

He will rule *the area* from the *Mediterranean Sea*
to the *Dead Sea,*
and from the *Euphrates River* to the most
distant places on the earth.

¹¹ As for you *my people of Jerusalem,*
because of the blood *of the animals that were*
sacrificed to make my agreement with you,
I will free your people who were forced to go to
other countries
where *it was as though they were kept in a*
waterless pit.

¹² *You people who were prisoners in those coun-*
tries who still confidently expect God to
help you,
return to *Judah,* where you will be safe.

This day I declare that I will give you two
blessings

for *each of the troubles that you have experienced.*

13 I will cause Judah to be like [MET] my bow,
and I will cause Israel to be *like* [MET] my
arrow.

I will enable you young men of Jerusalem to fight
against the soldiers of Greece;
you will be like [SIM] a warrior's sword."

Yahweh will protect his people

14 *Some day* Yahweh will appear *in the sky* above
his people,
and the arrows that he shoots will be like
[SIM] lightning.

Yahweh *our* Lord will blow his trumpet,
and he will march *fiercely*
like [MET] the storms from the south.

15 The Commander of the armies of angels will
protect *his people*;
the soldiers of Judah will attack and defeat
their enemies who attack them using sling-
shots.

Those soldiers of Judah will drink and celebrate
and shout like [SIM] people who are
drunk;
they will be as full *of wine* as the bowl that
holds *the blood of the animals that are*
sacrificed
and *which is then* sprinkled on the corners
of the altar.

16 On that day, Yahweh our God will save his
people
like a shepherd saves his flock of sheep from
danger.

In their land, they will be like [SIM] jewels that sparkle on a crown.

¹⁷ They will be delightful and beautiful.

The young men will become strong from *eating* grain,
and the young women will *become strong*
from *drinking* new wine.

10

Yahweh's promises for Judah and Israel

¹ Ask Yahweh to cause rain to fall ◀in the springtime/before the hot season starts▶, *because* he is the one who makes the clouds *from which the rain falls*.

He causes showers to fall on us,
and he causes crops to grow well in the fields.

² *What people think that* the idols in their houses suggest *is only* nonsense,
and people who *say that they can* interpret dreams tell *only* lies.

When they *tell people things to* comfort them, *what they say* is useless,
so the people *who* ◀consult/trust in▶ them are like lost sheep;

they are attacked because they have no *one to protect them*

like [MET] a shepherd *protects his sheep*.

³ *Yahweh says*, "I am angry with the leaders [MET] of my people,
and I will punish them.

I, the Commander of the armies of angels, take care of my people, the people of Judah,

like a shepherd takes care of his [MET] flock,
and I will cause them to be like [SIM] proud/
powerful war horses.

⁴ From Judah will come rulers *who will be very important,*

like [MET] a cornerstone is the most important stone for a house,

like [MET] a tent peg is very important for a tent,

like [MET] a bow is very important for ◀an archer/a man who shoots arrows▶.

⁵ They will all be like [SIM] mighty warriors
trampling *their enemies* in the mud during a
battle.

I, Yahweh, will be with them,
so they will fight and defeat their enemies
who ride on horses.

⁶ I will cause the people [MTY] of Judah to
become strong,

and I will rescue the people [MTY] of Israel.

I will bring them back *from the countries to which they were ◀exiled/forced to go▶;*

I will do that because I pity them.

Then they will be as though I had not abandoned
them,

because I am Yahweh, their God,

and I will answer them *when they pray for help.*

⁷ The people of Israel will be like [SIM] strong
soldiers;

they will be as happy as *people who have drunk a lot of wine.*

Their children will see *their fathers being very happy,*

and they *also* will be happy because of what Yahweh *has done for them*.

⁸ I will signal for my people *to return from* ◀*being exiled/other countries*▶,
and I will gather them together *in their own country*.

I will rescue them,
and they will become very numerous like *they were* previously.

⁹ I have caused them to be scattered among many people-groups,
but in those distant countries they will think about me again.

They and their children will remain alive and return *to Judah*.

¹⁰ I will bring them *back* from Egypt and from Assyria;

I will bring them *back* from the Gilead and Lebanon *regions*,
and there will hardly be enough [HYP] space for them all *to live in Judah*.

¹¹ They will endure/experience many difficulties *as though they were walking* [MET] through a sea,

but *I* will calm the waves of the sea;
the Nile River *which is usually* deep will dry up.
I will defeat the proud *soldiers of* Assyria,
and *I* will cause Egypt to no longer be powerful [MTY].

¹² I will enable my people to be strong,
and they will honor me and obey [IDM] me.
That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it.”

11

¹ *You people of [APO] Lebanon should open your gates, because you will not be able to stop fire from burning your cedar trees!*

² *Your cypress/pine trees [APO] should also wail because the cedar trees have been cut down. Those glorious/great trees have been destroyed.*

The oak trees in the Bashan region should also wail, because the other trees in the forest have been cut down.

³ *And listen to the shepherds crying because the fertile pastures have been ruined.*

Listen to the lions roar; they roar because the delightful forest where they live near the Jordan River has been ruined.

The parable of the two shepherds

⁴ *This is what Yahweh my God said to me: “I want you to become a shepherd for a flock of sheep that are about to be slaughtered. ⁵ The people who are going to buy the sheep will kill the sheep, and they will not be punished. Those who are selling the sheep say, ‘I praise Yahweh, because I will become rich!’ Even the shepherds do not feel sorry for the sheep. ⁶ And similarly, I no longer feel sorry for the people of this country. I am going to allow many of them [HYP] to be captured by other people or by their king.*

Those who capture them will ruin this country, and I will not rescue any *of the people*.”

⁷ So I became the shepherd of a flock *of sheep that were about to be slaughtered for their meat to be sold to the dealers. I took good care of the sheep, even the ones that were the weakest sheep. Then I took two shepherds’* ◀staves/walking sticks▶. I named the one *staff* ‘Kindness’ and the other *staff* ‘Union’. And I took good care of the sheep. ⁸ But the three shepherds *who had been working with me* detested me, and I became impatient with them. Within one month I ◀dismissed/got rid of▶ those shepherds.

⁹ So I said *to the dealers*, “I will no *longer* be the shepherd. I will allow the ones that are dying to die. I will allow the ones that are getting lost to get lost. And I will not prevent those that remain from destroying each other.”

¹⁰ Then I took the staff that I had named ‘Kindness’ and I broke it. *That showed that Yahweh was annulling/canceling the agreement that he had made with all the people-groups.*

¹¹ So that agreement was ended immediately. And the men who bought and sold sheep who were watching me knew *by seeing what I was doing* that I was giving them a message from Yahweh.

¹² I told them, “If you think it is what you should do, pay me *for taking care of the sheep*. If you do not think that is what you should do, do not pay me.” So they paid me *only 30 pieces of silver*.

¹³ Then Yahweh said to me, “*That is a ridiculously small amount of money that they have paid you! So throw it to the man who makes clay pots!*” So I took the silver to the temple of Yahweh, and I threw it in the chest where the offerings/money is kept.

¹⁴ Then I broke my second staff, *the one that I named ‘Union’*. That *indicated that Judah and Israel would no longer be united.*

¹⁵ Then Yahweh said to me, “Take again the things that a foolish shepherd uses, ¹⁶ because I am going to appoint a new king for the people, *one who will not take care of my people. He will be like a foolish shepherd: [MET] He will not take care of those who are dying, those who are very young, those who have been injured, or those who do not have enough food. Instead, he will treat them very cruelly, like a shepherd who would [MET] kill and eat the best sheep and tear off their hoofs.*

¹⁷ But terrible things will happen to that foolish/
useless king

who abandons the people [MET] over whom
he rules.

*His enemies will strike his arm and his right eye
with their swords.*

*The result will be that he will have no
strength in his arm,*

*and his right eye will become completely
blind.”*

12

Jerusalem will be rescued

¹ *This is* a message from Yahweh concerning Israel. Yahweh is the one who stretched out the sky, who created the earth, and who ◀gave life to humans/caused humans to be alive▶. This is what he says: ² “I will soon cause Jerusalem to be *like* [MET] a cup full of *very strong alcoholic drink*, and the people of other nations who drink it will stagger around. And they will come and attack Jerusalem and *the other towns in Judah*. ³ At that time, *the armies of* all the nations will gather to attack Jerusalem, but I will cause *the leaders of* Judah to be *like* [SIM] a very heavy rock, and all who *try to* lift it will be badly injured. ⁴ At that time I will cause every *one of their enemies’* horses to panic, and their riders to become crazy. I [IDM] will protect the people of Judah, but I will cause all their enemies’ horses to become blind. ⁵ Then the leaders of Judah will say to themselves, ‘The people in Jerusalem are strong because the Commander of the armies of angels is their God.’

⁶ At that time I will enable the leaders of Judah to be like [SIM] a pan containing hot coals *that is put* in a woodpile *to set it on fire*, or like [SIM] a burning torch *that is put* in a *field of* ripe grain *to set it on fire*. The leaders of Judah *and their army* will destroy the people of the surrounding nations in all directions. But *the people of* Jerusalem will remain safe.

⁷ And *I*, Yahweh, will protect the tents of *the soldiers in other places in* Judah before *I rescue the people of Jerusalem*, in order that the leaders of Jerusalem [DOU] will not be honored more

than *the people in other places in Judah are honored*. ⁸ At that time, I will protect [MET] the people of Jerusalem. When that happens, even the weakest people in Jerusalem will be *strong like King David was*. And the descendants [MTY] of David will *rule the people like I would*, as though an angel sent from *me*, Yahweh, was their leader. ⁹ At that time, I will prepare to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem.”

Mourning for the one who will be stabbed

¹⁰ “I, Yahweh, will cause the descendants [MTY] of *King David* to act very kindly and mercifully. They will look at me, *the one* who has been stabbed, and they will cry bitterly, like people cry for a firstborn son *who has died* [DOU]. ¹¹ At that time, many people in Jerusalem will be crying bitterly, like people cried *when King Josiah was killed in the battle* at Hadad-Rimmon on the Megiddo Plain. ¹² Many people in Judah will cry, each family by themselves: the male descendants of David by themselves, and their wives by themselves, the male descendants of *David’s son Nathan* by themselves, and their wives by themselves, ¹³ the male descendants [MTY] of Levi by themselves, and their wives by themselves, the male descendants of *Levi’s grandson Shimei* by themselves, and their wives by themselves, ¹⁴ and all the other members *of the kings’ clans and the priests’ clans* by themselves, and their wives by themselves.”

13

Getting rid of idols and false prophets

¹ At that time *it will be as though* [MET] there will be a fountain from which water flows continually to cleanse the descendants [MTY] of King David and *all the other* people in Jerusalem from the guilt of the sins that they have committed, *especially* from becoming unacceptable to me *by worshiping idols*.

² The Commander of the armies of angels says, “At that time, I will prevent *people from even mentioning* the names of the idols in their country, and no one will remember them any more. I will also expel from the land all the people who falsely claim that they are prophets [DOU].

³ If someone continues to prophesy *falsely*, his parents must say to him, ‘You have told lies saying that Yahweh [MTY] gave those messages to you, so you must be executed.’ *So* if someone prophesies *like that*, his own father and mother must stab him *and kill him*.

⁴ At that time, the false prophets will be ashamed *that they claimed to have received messages from me in their visions and prophesies that they told to people*. They will no longer deceive people by wearing the clothes *that prophets usually wear*, clothes made of *animals’* hair. ⁵ *So* each of them will say, ‘I am not *really* a prophet; I am a farmer, and I have been a farmer on my land ever since I was a boy!’ ⁶ But someone, *seeing the wounds on one of those prophet’s bodies, will suspect that he injured*

himself during rituals to worship idols, and he will ask ‘Why are those wounds on your body?’ And he will lie, saying ‘I was injured when I was at my friend’s house.’ ”

What will happen to the shepherd and the sheep

⁷ The Commander of the armies of angels says, “My sword [APO] must strike *the one who is like* [MET] my shepherd, the man who is ◀my companion/very <close/dear> to me▶.

When the shepherd is killed, *those who are like* [MET] his sheep will scatter. *And those who are like* [MET] my little sheep will *also* be attacked [IDM].”

⁸ Yahweh *also* says, “Two-thirds of the people in Judah will die [DOU]. *Only one-third of the people in Judah* will remain alive.

⁹ And I will test the ones that remain alive *by causing them to experience great difficulties, to find out if they will continue to worship me.*

I will purify them like [MET] a man purifies gold or silver by putting it into a *very hot fire.*

Then my people will call to me [MTY] *for help,* and I will answer them.

I will say *to them,* ‘You are my people,’ and they will say, ‘Yahweh is our God.’ ”

14

When Yahweh will rule

¹ Listen! It will soon be the time when Yahweh *will judge everyone*. At that time, the possessions that were taken from you *people of Jerusalem by your enemies will be returned to you, and will be divided among you*.

² *Before that happens*, Yahweh will cause *the armies of many [HYP] nations to attack Jerusalem*. They will capture the city and steal all the valuable things from your houses and rape the women. They will take half of the people to other countries, but the other half of the people will be allowed to remain in the city.

³ Then Yahweh will go out to fight against those nations; he will fight like [SIM] *soldiers fight in a battle*. ⁴ On that day, he will stand on Olive Tree Hill, east of Jerusalem. Olive Tree Hill will be split into two *parts*, with a large valley between the parts. Half of the hill will move toward the north and half *will move* toward the south. ⁵ People will flee through that valley which extends to the other side (OR, to Azel), like [SIM] people fled when there was an earthquake during the time that King Uzziah ruled Judah. Then Yahweh my God will come with his holy *angels*.

⁶ At that time, there will be no light *from the sun*; it will not become cold and there will be no frost. ⁷ There has been no other time like that time, and only Yahweh knows when it will happen. There will be no daytime or

nighttime; there will be *light continually, even in the evening.*

⁸ At that time, running/fresh water will flow from Jerusalem. One stream will flow toward the east to the *Dead Sea*. The other stream will flow toward the west to the *Mediterranean Sea*. The water will flow *all the time*, during ◀summer/the hot season▶ as well as in ◀winter/the cold season▶.

⁹ After that time, Yahweh will be the king *who rules* the entire world. *Everyone will know that Yahweh, and only Yahweh [MTY], is the true God.*

¹⁰ *At that time*, all the land in Judah from Geba town at the north to Rimmon town far to the south of Jerusalem, will become a plain. Jerusalem will remain raised up like it has always been. *It will extend* from the Benjamin Gate and the First Gate *northeast* to the Tower of Hananel, and to the king's winepresses *to the southwest*. ¹¹ Many people will live there, and the city will never be destroyed again. It will be a safe city.

¹² But Yahweh will cause the people in all the nations that attacked Jerusalem to be afflicted by a ◀plague/severe illness▶. Their flesh will rot while they are still standing up. Their eyes will rot in their sockets and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³ At that time, Yahweh will cause many people to panic. People will grab and attack each other. ¹⁴ *The people who live in other places in Judah will fight to defend Jerusalem. They will collect the valuable things from the surrounding nations—a lot of gold and silver and*

clothes. ¹⁵ The same plague *that will afflict the people of other nations* will afflict their horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other work animals in their ◀camps/places where they have set up their tents▶.

¹⁶ The people of other nations who *previously* came *to fight* against Jerusalem, all those who are still alive, will return to Jerusalem every year to worship the King, the Commander of the armies of angels, and to celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters. ¹⁷ If there are people in those nations who do not go *to Jerusalem to worship there*, rain will not fall on their land. ¹⁸ If the people of Egypt *or any other nation* do not go to Jerusalem, *they will not have any rain*. And Yahweh will cause them to experience the same plague that afflicted the *people of other nations* that did not celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters. ¹⁹ That is how *Yahweh* will punish *the people of Egypt* and *the people of any other nation* who do not go *to Jerusalem* to celebrate the Festival of Living in Temporary Shelters.

²⁰ At that time, *the words* ‘Dedicated to Yahweh’ will be written on the bells that are fastened to the horses. The *cooking pots in the courtyard of the temple* will be *sacred*, like the bowls that are near the altar. ²¹ Every pot in Jerusalem and *in other places in Judah* will be dedicated to the Commander of the armies of angels. So everyone who offers sacrifices *there in Jerusalem* will be able to take some of the meat that has been brought for sacrifices, and cook it in their

own pots. And at that time, people will no longer buy or sell things in *the courtyard of* the temple of the Commander of the armies of angels.

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